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(54) **RESIN COMPOSITION FOR ELECTRONIC PARTS.**

(57) The invention aims at providing a resin composition for electronic parts which is in great demand as a circuit board material for electric and electronic equipments, and which has a low dielectric constant, low dielectric dissipation factor and a thermal resistance. This resin consists of a thermoplastic resin or a thermosetting resin, and wollastonite or zonotolite, fibrous material containing  $\text{CaO} \cdot \text{SiO}_2$  as a main component, mixed as reinforcing fiber with the resin at a mixing ratio of 5-60 % based on the total weight of the resin and fiber.

## TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to an electronic device resin composition having low dielectric constant, low dielectric loss tangent and high heat resistance characteristics which are highly demanded in electric and electronic circuit board substrates.

## BACKGROUND ART

As the circuit board substrate material, the so-called glass-epoxy board manufactured by impregnating a glass mat with an epoxy resin, i.e. a thermosetting resin, and causing the resin to cure is generally employed. However, this substrate finds application only in planar printed circuit boards and, moreover, having a large dielectric constant of 4.5-5.5 and a large dielectric loss tangent of 0.020-0.035, is not fully satisfactory for the transmission of information because of the following circumstances.

Thus, the propagation delay time  $T_d$  (ns/m) of an electric signal can be expressed by the equation  $T_d = 3.33/\sqrt{\epsilon_{\text{eff}}}$  ( $\epsilon_{\text{eff}}$ : effective dielectric constant). It is seen from this equation that the smaller the dielectric constant, the shorter is the propagation delay time and the higher is the propagation speed, thus enabling a high-speed operation. On the other hand, the dielectric loss  $\alpha_D$  (dB/m) in a strip line is subject to the relation  $\alpha_D = 27.3 \times (f/c) \times \sqrt{\epsilon} \times \tan \delta$  ( $f$  = frequency,  $c$  = velocity of light,  $\epsilon$  = dielectric constant,  $\tan \delta$  = dielectric loss tangent). Thus, in order to decrease the dielectric loss, a substrate board with small dielectric constant and dielectric loss tangent values must be employed.

Recently, an injection-molded one-piece three-dimensional circuit board comprising a substrate board, a chassis and other structural components as a package has been manufactured by employing a thermoplastic resin as the resin matrix and either glass fiber, milled glass fiber or potassium titanate whiskers as the fiber reinforcement (Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication No. 35585/1991) or a granular inorganic filler (talc, calcium pyrophosphate, etc.) without addition of reinforcing fibers. However, for a further sophistication of data communication or an enhancement of high-speed operability of data processing equipment, still further decreases in dielectric constant and dielectric loss tangent are needed.

Reinforcing fibers are added for enhancing the mechanical strength, improving the resistance to heat deformation during a soldering operation and reducing the coefficient of linear expansion (improving dimensional accuracy) of the matrix resin. However, with glass fiber or milled glass fiber, the dielectric constant of the substrate can be held comparatively low but the disadvantage occurs that because the dielectric loss is increased, the signal transmission rate required of a circuit board is decreased. In the data processing equipment of late, an ever higher transmission signal frequency is being sought after and as will be clear from the computation formula for dielectric loss, the above-mentioned disadvantage is assuming a more and more significant meaning.

Furthermore, glass fiber and milled glass fibers are fairly coarse, namely 5-15  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and not less than 100  $\mu\text{m}$  in length, so that such problems are inevitable as poor surface smoothness of the board, incidence of uncovered areas in the formation of delicate circuits in the plating or other process, and injury of the tip of a wire bonder in the connecting of gold conductors.

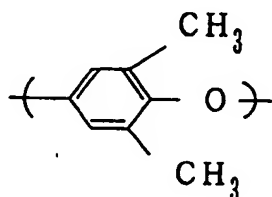
On the other hand, potassium titanate whiskers are a fine reinforcing material with a fiber diameter of 0.05-2  $\mu\text{m}$  and a fiber length of 2-50  $\mu\text{m}$  and when they are used in an electronic device resin composition, the whiskers contribute to increased mechanical strength, improved resistance to thermal deformation and lower linear expansion coefficient but have the drawback that their high dielectric constant detract from the speed of data transmission and the increased dielectric loss tangent resulting from its addition lowers the data transmission rate.

## DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

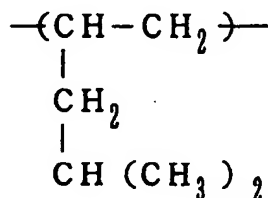
The inventors of this invention endeavoring to resolve the above problems discovered that by using a thermoplastic or thermosetting resin as the matrix resin and formulating it with a fiber component selected from the group consisting of whiskers of the composition represented by the general formula  $aA_xO_y \cdot bB_2O_3$  (wherein  $a$  and  $b$  each represents a whole number of 1-9,  $A$  represents a bivalent or trivalent metal,  $x$  and  $y$  each represents a whole number of 1-3) and either wollastonite or xonotlite, which is a fibrous substance composed predominantly of  $\text{CaO} \cdot \text{SiO}_2$ , as the reinforcing fiber in certain proportions, the dielectric constant of the matrix resin can be held low (2.0-4.5) and yet the dielectric loss tangent can be rather decreased as compared with the matrix resin as such. Thus, it was confirmed that the dielectric constant required for said sophistication of data transmission can be held not higher than 3.5 and the dielectric loss tangent ( $\tan \delta$ ) be held not over 0.001. This invention has been developed on the basis of the above findings.

This invention is therefore concerned with an electronic device resin composition characterized in that a reinforcing fiber component selected from the group consisting of whiskers of the composition represented by the general formula  $aA_xO_y \cdot bB_2O_3$  (wherein a, b, A, x and y have the meanings defined hereinbefore) and fibers of either wollastonite or xonotlite, which is a fibrous substance composed predominantly of  $CaO \cdot SiO_2$ , is contained in a thermoplastic or thermosetting resin in a proportion of 5 to 60% based on the total weight of said resin and fiber.

The thermoplastic resin that can be used in the practice of this invention includes poly(phenylene ether) resins having the following unit structure:



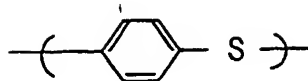
poly(phenylene ether) resins whose impact resistance and moldability have been improved by addition of minor amounts of a polystyrene or a styrene-butadiene elastomer, syndiotactic polystyrene synthesized under structural control with a metallocene catalyst, 5-methylpentene resin having the following unit structure:



cyclopolyolefin resins comprising cyclic olefins as a constituent, such as polynorbornene resin having the following unit structure:



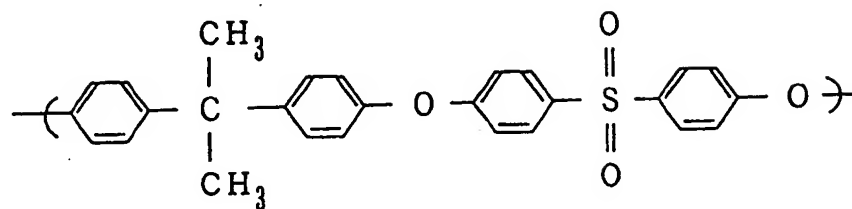
heat-resistant ABS resin whose thermal deformation temperature has been improved by copolymerization with maleimide, heat-resistant polyamide resins such as polyamide-4,6 which is a polycondensation product of 1,4-diaminobutane with adipic acid, polyamide-6T which is obtainable from hexamethylenediamine and terephthalic acid, modified polyamide-6T obtainable by using isophthalic acid or adipic acid for part of the terephthalic acid component, polyamide-6/6T which is a copolymer of  $\epsilon$ -caprolactam, hexamethylenediamine and terephthalic acid, polyamide-6, 6/6T which is a copolymer of hexamethylenediamine, adipic acid and terephthalic acid, etc., poly(phenylene sulfide) resin having the following unit structure:



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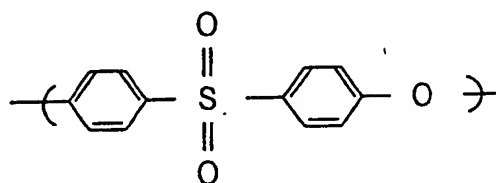
aromatic polysulfone resin comprising the following unit structure:

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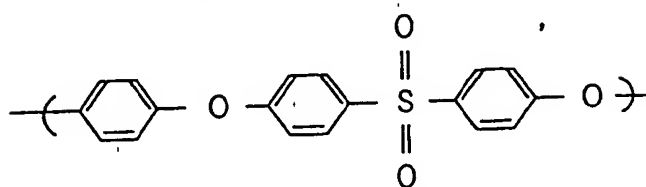
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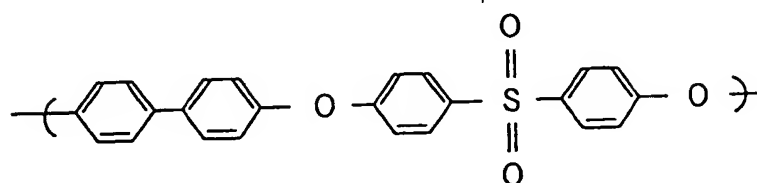


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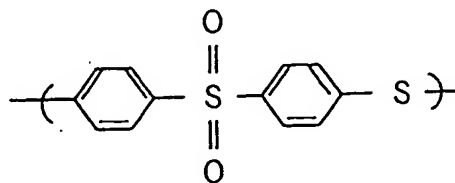
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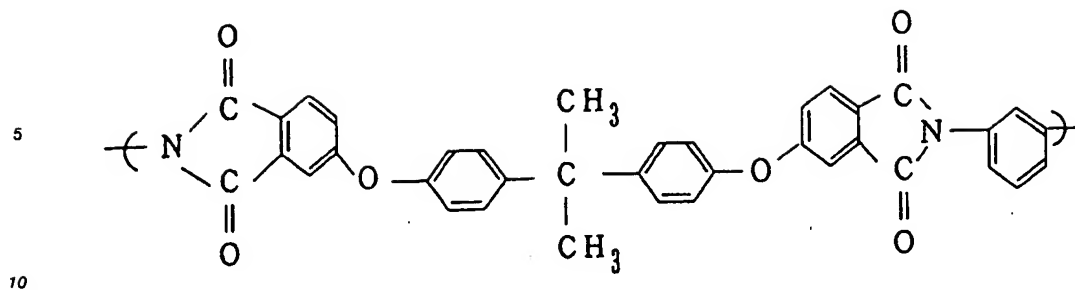
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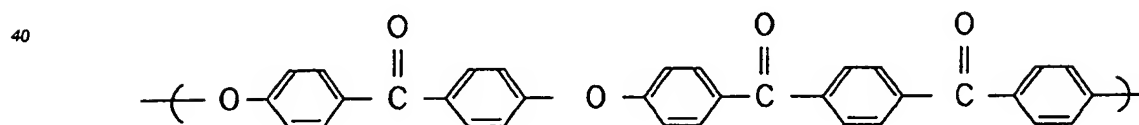
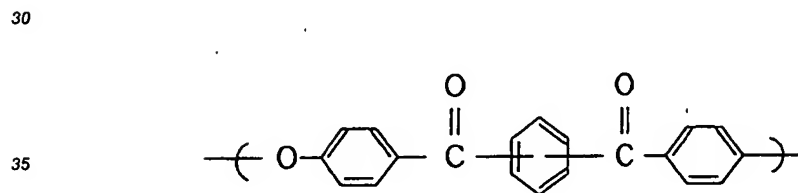
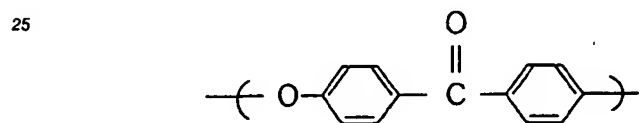
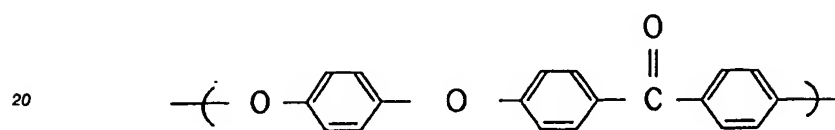
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polyetherimide resin having the following unit structure:

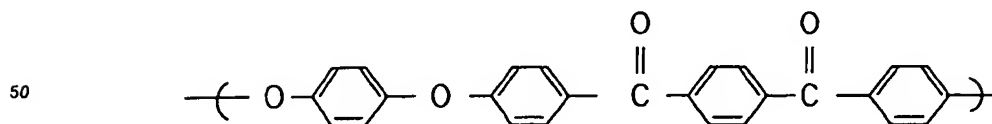
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15 polyetherketone resin having the following unit structure:



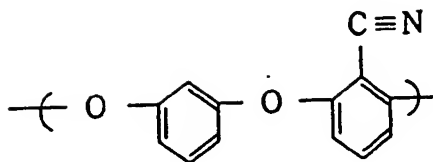
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or



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polyethernitrile resin having the following unit structure:

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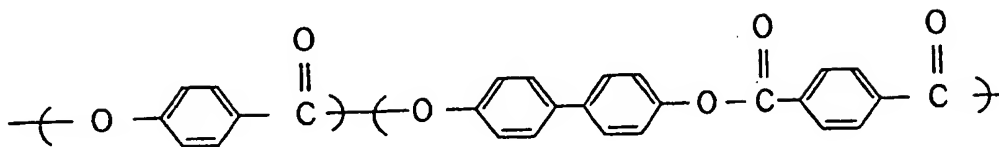
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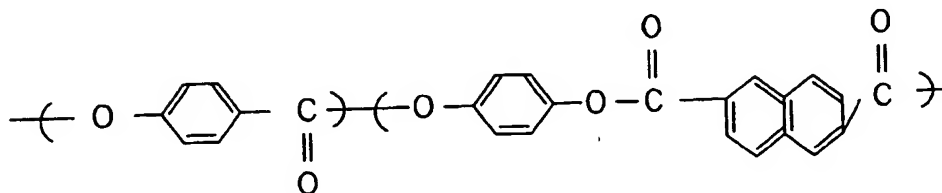
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thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin having the following unit structure:

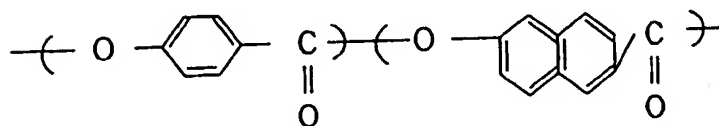
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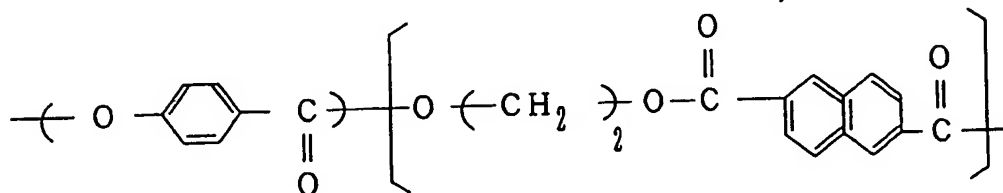


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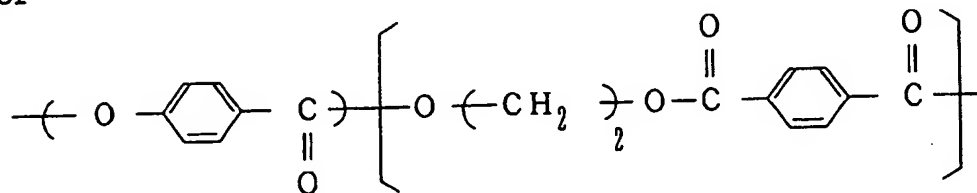
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or

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heat-fusible fluororesin such as ethylene-tetrafluoroethylene copolymer, tetrafluoroethylene-hexafluoropropylene copolymer, tetrafluoroethylene-perfluoroalkoxyvinylether copolymer, etc., among others. In this invention, these resins are used singly or in combination.

The thermosetting resin includes phenolic resin, epoxy resin, unsaturated polyester resin, etc. but as the composition of this invention it is particularly preferable to use a resin composition based on a glycidyl ether type heat-resistant polyfunctional epoxy resin and designed for a reduced hot elasticity through

modification with phenolic resin as the curing agent and selection of the catalyst.

The reinforcing fiber for use in this invention is a fiber selected from the group consisting of whiskers of the composition represented by the general formula  $aA_xO_y \cdot bB_2O_3$  (wherein a, b, A, x and y have the meanings defined hereinbefore) and wollastonite or xonotlite which is a fibrous substance composed predominantly of  $CaO \cdot SiO_2$ .

The whiskers of general formula  $aA_xO_y \cdot bB_2O_3$  include aluminum borate whiskers corresponding to Al for A and magnesium borate whiskers corresponding to Mg for A, among others.

The aluminum borate whiskers include aluminum borate whiskers of the formula  $9Al_2O_3 \cdot 2B_2O_3$  and aluminum borate whiskers of the formula  $2Al_2O_3 \cdot 2B_2O_3$ . These whiskers invariably occur as white acicular crystals (needles) and can be easily produced by, for example, heating at least one species selected from among aluminum hydroxide and inorganic salts of aluminum and at least one species selected from the oxide, oxoacid and alkali metal salts of boron in the presence of at least one fusing agent selected from among the sulfates, chlorides and carbonates of alkali metals at a firing temperature of 600-1200 °C for interaction and crystal growth.

The aluminum borate whiskers of the formula  $9Al_2O_3 \cdot 2B_2O_3$  are whiskers with a true specific gravity of 2.93-2.95 and a melting point of 1420-1460 °C and are preferably of a grade produced at a firing temperature of 900-1200 °C. The aluminum borate whiskers of the formula  $2Al_2O_3 \cdot 2B_2O_3$  have a true specific gravity of 2.92-2.94 and a melting point of 1030-1070 °C and are preferably whiskers produced at a firing temperature of 600-1000 °C.

The aluminum borate whiskers commercially available today include those of the formula  $9Al_2O_3 \cdot 2B_2O_3$  (Alborex G, Shikoku Chemical Industrial) which has an average fiber diameter of 0.5-1 μm and an average fiber length of 10-30 μm.

The magnesium borate whiskers specifically include magnesium borate whiskers of the formula  $2MgO \cdot B_2O_3$ . Whiskers of this type occur as white acicular crystals and can be easily produced by heating a magnesium donor selected from among the oxide, hydroxide and inorganic salts of magnesium and a boron donor selected from among the oxide, oxoacid and alkali metal salts of boron in the presence of at least one fusing agent selected from among sodium halides and potassium halides at a temperature of 600-1000 °C. The magnesium borate whiskers of the formula  $2MgO \cdot B_2O_3$  are preferably whiskers with a true specific gravity of 2.90 - 2.92 and a melting point of 1320 - 1360 °C.

These aluminum borate whiskers and/or magnesium borate whiskers can be industrially made available in the fiber diameter range of 0.05 - 5 μm and the fiber length range of 2 - 100 μm and all of such products can be used in this invention. However, from the standpoint of ease of production, whiskers in the fiber diameter range of 0.1 - 2 μm and fiber length range of 10 - 50 μm are suitable.

The fibrous substance composed predominantly of  $CaO \cdot SiO_2$  includes wollastonite of the formula  $CaO \cdot SiO_2$  and xonotlite of the formula  $6CaO \cdot 6SiO_2 \cdot H_2O$ , among others. Wollastonite is a natural substance occurring as white acicular crystals and, regardless of fibrous form or block form, wollastonite can be used as it is or after crushing and size-selection. Synthetic wollastonite can of course be employed.

The above-mentioned fibrous substance varies in aspect ratio according to the crushing method used and the origin or source but generally β-wollastonite, which has a large aspect ratio, is preferred in view of its greater reinforcing effect.

For improved mechanical properties and thermal characteristics of the final composition, it is preferable to employ a fine and elongated wollastonite in which (a) component(s) having an aspect ratio of 6 or more accounts for at least 60 weight %, preferably not less than 80 weight %, and (a) component(s) having a fiber length of not more than 5 μm accounts for at least 80 weight %, preferably not less than 95 weight %. The elongated but coarse wollastonite which contains fibers measuring 6 μm or more in diameter in a proportion of 80 weight % or more even though it contains fibers with aspect ratios not less than 10 in a proportion of 60 weight % or more tends to break during compounding with the resin and can hardly insure a good balance between mechanical and thermal characteristics.

Some of the wollastonite products available commercially today meet the above requirements and their average fiber diameter and length are 2.0 μm and 25 μm, respectively. Since the proportion of individual fibers measuring 5 μm or less in diameter accounts for not less than 95 weight % and the proportion of fibers having aspect ratios not smaller than 6 accounts for 90 weight %, they are quite satisfactory in reinforcing effect and surface smoothness.

On the other hand, xonotlite is a fibrous calcium silicate of the chemical formula  $6CaO \cdot 6SiO_2 \cdot H_2O$  and varieties with average fiber diameters in the range of 0.5 - 1 μm, average fiber lengths in the range of 2 - 5 μm and aspect ratios in the range of 2 - 15 have already been synthesized. Unlike wollastonite, xonotlite contains water of crystallization but it was discovered that as far as dielectric characteristics are concerned, this substance produces effects similar to the effects of wollastonite. In regard of reinforcing effect, too, it

was found that by employing a species having an aspect ratio as large as possible (preferably 6 or more), improvements in mechanical properties and heat resistance (thermal deformation temperature) can be realized.

It is only sufficient that at least one member of the group consisting of whiskers of the general formula  $aA_xO_y \cdot bB_2O_3$ , wollastonite fibers and xonotlite fibers be included, as a dominant fiber component, in the fiber reinforcement in the practice of this invention. Its proportion is not so critical but should generally be not less than 50 weight % and preferably not less than 80 weight %. Within the limits not adversely affecting the effect of this invention, such other reinforcing fibers as glass fiber, carbon fiber, milled glass fiber, alkali metal titanate whiskers, etc. may also be contained.

As regards the amount of said fiber with respect to said thermoplastic or thermosetting resin, it is essential that the fiber be added in a proportion of 5 - 60% based on the combined weight of the resin and fiber (resin composition). If the proportion of fiber is less than 5%, no sufficient improvements will be realized, namely a sufficient decrease in dielectric loss tangent and sufficient increases in mechanical properties and resistance to thermal deformation. Conversely, if the limit of 60% is exceeded, the disadvantage occurs that the fibers can hardly be compounded with the molten thermoplastic resin or dispersed in the solution of the thermosetting resin and this compounding or dispersing operation results in a viscosity increase to seriously interfere with the molding operation. In the practice of this invention, the fibers are preferably used in a proportion of 10 - 40%.

Within the range not contrary to the object of this invention, a variety of conventional additives, for example a finely divided filler such as talc, calcium pyrophosphate, etc., an antioxidant, a heat stabilizer, an ultraviolet absorber, a coloring agent such as dyes and pigments, a lubricant such as fluororesin, a parting agent, an antistatic agent, etc., can be incorporated in suitable amounts.

The resin composition of this invention can be produced by a liberal choice of the per se known production techniques. For example, when a thermoplastic resin is employed, said additives are first incorporated in the resin by means of a tumbler, ribbon mixer or the like device. Then, using a twin-screw extruding machine, a predetermined amount of said fiber is fed to the resin matrix in the course of compounding and pelletized. In the case of a thermosetting resin, a super-mixer or a kneader is charged with the green (uncured) resin and the fiber and additives are then added to the resin, after which a curing agent and a catalyst are added, with the product being withdrawn in a paste form.

In accordance with this invention, there is provided an electronic device resin composition having low dielectric constant, low dielectric loss tangent and high heat resistance characteristics which are much demanded in electric and electronic circuit board materials. The electronic device resin composition of this invention can be used in a broad spectrum of applications ranging, for example, from semiconductor packages such as chip carriers, pin-grid arrays, etc. to bases for resistors, switches, capacitors, photosensors, etc. to various structural parts such as IC sockets, connectors and so on. In particular, this resin composition is useful for the fabrication of printed circuit boards for high-frequency devices represented by satellite broadcasting-related equipment and information processing equipment components. In the field of home appliances, the resin composition finds application in various vessels compatible with electronic cookers.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a photomicrogram showing the morphology of the wollastonite A fiber used in the examples. Fig. 2 is a photomicrogram showing the morphology of the wollastonite B fiber used in the examples. Fig. 3 is a photomicrogram showing the morphology of the wollastonite C fiber used in the examples.

#### BEST MODE OF PRACTICING THE INVENTION

The following examples and comparative examples are intended to describe this invention in further detail. It should be understood that both dielectric constant and dielectric loss were determined according to JIS K-6911, tensile strength according to JIS K-7113, flexural strength and flexural modulus of elasticity according to JIS K-7203, and Izod strength (notched) according to JIS K-7110.

#### Examples 1 - 5 and Comparative Examples 1 & 2

Pellets were provided by using, as the poly(phenylene ether) resin, Xylon PXL-2502 (Asahi Chemical Industry Co., Ltd.) having a thermal deformation temperature of 150°C under a load of 18.6 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup> and, as reinforcing whiskers, 15 weight % or 30 weight % of Alborex G (Shikoku Chemicals Corp.; aluminum borate



whiskers) having a composition of  $9\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 2\text{B}_2\text{O}_3$ , a fiber diameter of  $0.5 - 1.0 \mu\text{m}$  and a fiber length of  $10 - 30 \mu\text{m}$ , Suanite (Otsuka Chemical Co., Ltd.; magnesium borate whiskers) having a composition of  $2\text{MgO} \cdot \text{B}_2\text{O}_3$ , a fiber diameter of  $0.5 - 2.0 \mu\text{m}$  and a fiber length of  $20 - 40 \mu\text{m}$ , or, as control, TISMO-D (Otsuka Chemical Co., Ltd.; potassium titanate whisker) having a composition of  $\text{K}_2\text{O} \cdot 8\text{TiO}_2$ , an average  
5 fiber diameter of  $0.4 \mu\text{m}$  and an average fiber length of  $15 \mu\text{m}$ . Using a twin-screw extruder (Ikegai Iron Works, PCM45) at a cylinder temperature of  $300^\circ\text{C}$ , PXL 2502 was first melted and the whiskers were then added in the course of compounding (side feed system), followed by strand cutting. Each of these kinds of pellets was injection-molded using an injection machine (Nissei Resin Industries, FS-150) at a cylinder temperature of  $320^\circ\text{C}$ , a die temperature of  $100^\circ\text{C}$  and an injection pressure of  $800 \text{ kg/cm}^2 \text{ G}$ . The  
10 physical properties of the resin moldings thus obtained were determined.

The results are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1

	Example					Comparative Example	
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
Compound- ing formula							
Poly(phenylene ether) resin	93	85	70	85	70	100	70
Aluminum borate whiskers	7	15	30	-	-	-	-
Magnesium borate whiskers	-	-	-	15	30	-	-
Potassium titanate whiskers	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Dielectric con- stant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C] Dielectric loss tangent	2.7	2.9	3.2	2.7	2.9	2.7	4.6
$\tan \delta$ [1MHz, 25°C] Tensile strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> ) Flexural strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> ) Flexural modulus of elasticity (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> ) Izod impact strength (kgf·cm/cm)	670	780	980	710	900	580	970
Physico- electri- cal proper- ties of resin composi- tion	980	1100	1330	1020	1220	880	1420
	35000	52000	83000	44000	67000	21000	71000
	12.3	6.7	4.2	5.5	3.7	37.1	3.0
Thermal deforma- tion temperature (°C)	157	165	173	164	172	150	173

While poly(phenylene ether) resin inherently has very low dielectric constant and dielectric loss tangent values as seen from Table 1 and, as such, is an optimal matrix resin for circuit board use (Comparative Example 1), it is apparent from Examples 1 - 5 and Comparative Example 2 that incorporation of a reinforcing fiber (whiskers) is effective for enhancing the heat resistance and mechanical properties.

However, it can be seen that whereas the addition of potassium titanate whiskers, which are frequently utilized as ceramic whiskers, in a proportion of 30 weight % resulted in the dielectric constant and dielectric

loss tangent of as high as 4.6 and 0.0853, respectively, the addition of aluminum borate whiskers and magnesium borate whiskers improved the mechanical properties and thermal deformation temperature while holding the dielectric constant as low as 3.2 and 2.9, respectively, and the dielectric loss tangent as low as not greater than 0.0001 in both cases.

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Examples 6 - 11 and Comparative Examples 3 - 5

Resin compositions (pellets) were prepared in the same manner as Examples 1 - 5 except that Ultem #1010-1000 (distributor: GE Plastics Japan) was used as the polyetherimide resin at an extruder cylinder temperature of 340 °C and Vectra C950 (distributor: Poly plastics) was used as the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester as an extruder cylinder temperature of 310 °C. The polyetherimide resin composition was injection-molded at a cylinder temperature of 370 °C, a die temperature of 120 °C and an injection pressure of 700 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup> G and the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin composition was similarly molded at a cylinder temperature of 330 °C, a die temperature of 120 °C and an injection pressure of 800 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup> G. The physical properties of the respective products were determined. The results for the polyetherimide resin composition are shown in Table 2 and those for the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin are shown in Table 3. It should be understood that neutral Tismo N (K<sub>2</sub>O·6TiO<sub>2</sub>, Otsuka Chemical Co., Ltd.) was used as the potassium titanate whisker for the purpose of preventing an increase of viscosity on melting of the polyetherimide resin and for the purpose of preventing alkaline decomposition in the case of the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester.

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Table 2

	Example					Comparative Example				
	6	7	8	3	4	5				
Polyetherimide resin	85	70	70	100	85	70				
Compound- ing formula	Aluminum borate whiskers	15	30	-	-	-				
	Magnesium borate whiskers	-	-	30	-	-				
	Potassium titanate whiskers	-	-	-	-	15				30
	Dielectric constant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C]	3.7	3.9	3.5	3.6	4.8				6.1
	Dielectric loss tangent	0.0012	0.0003	0.0001	0.002	0.0367				0.0713
Physico-electrical properties of resin composition	$\tan \delta$ [1MHz, 25°C]	1200	1330	1250	1100	1160				1240
	Tensile strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	1740	2080	1670	1400	1520				1630
	Flexural strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	77000	126000	82000	28000	46000				67000
	Flexural modulus of elasticity (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	2.5	2.7	2.6	1.8	2.5				2.3
	Izod impact strength (kgf·cm/cm)									

Table 3

	Example					Comparative Example	
	9	10	11	6	7	8	
Compound- ing formula	75	50	55	100	75	55	
	-	-	20	-	-	20	
	25	50	25	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	25	25	
	Thermotropic LC polyester resin						
Physico- electri- cal proper- ties of resin composi- tion	Calcium pyrophosphate powder						
	Aluminum borate whiskers						
	Potassium titanate whiskers						
	Dielectric constant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C]	3.5	3.7	3.8	3.1	5.6	5.2
	Dielectric loss tangent	0.010	0.001	0.013	0.020	0.134	0.073
	$\tan\delta$ [1MHz, 25°C]	1970	1950	1370	990	1840	1220
	Tensile strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	2080	2250	1870	1470	2050	1630
	Flexural strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	152000	215000	151000	58000	133000	132000
	Flexural modulus of elasticity (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	4.3	3.7	3.5	2.5	4.3	3.7
	Izod impact strength (kgf·cm/cm)	245	253	248	210	245	246
Thermal deformation temperature (°C)							

Referring to Table 2, while the reinforcing effect of whiskers is comparatively small on the polyetherimide resin which is amorphous, the reinforcing effect of aluminum borate whiskers is outstanding. The effects on dielectric characteristics are also worth attention. Thus, the dielectric constant is considerably increased with an increasing proportion of whiskers in the case of potassium titanate whiskers. In the case of aluminum borate whiskers and magnesium borate whiskers, the dielectric constant is little increased and the dielectric loss tangent was considerably diminished, compared with the resin alone (Comparative Example 3), with an increasing proportion of the whiskers, for example by one digit at the addition level of

30 weight %, in particular, so that very satisfactory characteristics for a circuit board can be implemented.

It is also apparent from Table 3 that compared with the polyetherimide which is an amorphous resin, the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin is more receptive to the reinforcing effect of whiskers because of its crystalline structure. In this case, too, the incorporation of potassium titanate whiskers resulted in a fairly increased dielectric constant and an increase of one digit in dielectric loss tangent. In contrast, with aluminum borate whiskers, the dielectric constant was increased only in a minor degree and the dielectric loss tangent rather decreased with an increasing proportion of the whisker as compared with the case of the resin alone. The calcium pyrophosphate powder (average particle diameter ca. 10  $\mu\text{m}$ , Taihei Chemical Industrial) was added as an etching auxiliary agent for the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin. With respect to potassium titanate whiskers, the agent improves dielectric characteristics in a certain measure. However, in the case of aluminum borate whiskers, it tends to decrease the dielectric characteristics.

#### Example 12 and Comparative Examples 9 - 11

A phenol-epoxy resin (EPCLON 850, Dainippon Ink And Chemicals) was used as the thermosetting resin and 50 weight % of an E glass short fiber (Nippon Electric Glass Fiber) measuring 13  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and 1.5 mm long, a potassium titanate fiber (Otsuka Chemical, Tismo-D), or aluminum borate whiskers (Shikoku Chemicals, Alborex G) as the filler. After the fiber had been well dispersed in the resin, metaxylenediamine was added at the rate of 15 phR (15 parts by weight with respect to 100 parts by weight of the epoxy resin). The composition was further stirred, degassed under reduced pressure and cast onto a Teflon sheet surrounded by a 3 mm-thick spacer. The casting was allowed to stand at ambient temperature for 3 hours, after which it was cured at 130°C for 3 hours. The flexural strength and deflection temperature under load (18.5 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup>) were determined according to JIS K-6911 and the surface roughness was measured using Surfcom 300B (Tokyo Seimitsu Co., Ltd.) and expressed in center mean roughness Ra. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

	Example	Comparative Example			
		12	9	10	11
Compound- ing formula	Epoxy resin Aluminum borate whiskers	50	100	50	50
	Glass fiber	-	-	50	-
	Potassium titanate whiskers	-	-	-	50
Physico- electri- cal proper- ties of resin composi- tion	Dielectric con- stant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C] Dielectric loss tangent $\tan \delta$ [1MHz, 25°C] Flexural strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> ) Deflection tem- perature under load (°C) Surface roughness ( $\mu\text{m}$ )	3.8 0.0007 1180 150 0.3	3.9 0.007 530 125 0.2	4.8 0.012 1100 150 2.3	6.2 0.115 1070 147 0.2

It can be seen from Table 4 that in the case of thermosetting resin, the effect of aluminum borate whiskers on dielectric characteristics is superior to the corresponding effect of glass fiber which is conventionally used (not to speak of potassium titanate whiskers) and that whereas the dielectric constant and dielectric loss tangent values obtainable with other reinforcing materials are inferior to the values found without the use of any reinforcing material, the use of aluminum borate whiskers results in dielectric characteristics very suited to a circuit board material, with the dielectric constant being comparable to or somewhat smaller and the dielectric loss tangent being reduced by one digit.

In terms of surface roughness, too, it was found that a submicron smoothness characteristic of whiskers can be realized, with consequent great advantages in the adhesion of copper foil, circuit printability and so on.

#### Examples 13 - 16 and Comparative Examples 12 - 13

As the cyclic polyolefin resin, Zeonex 480 (Nippon Zeon) having a thermal deformation temperature of 123°C under a load of 18.6 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup> was provided and as the wollastonite, 15 or 30 weight % of a wollastonite available commercially in the United States of America and having an average fiber diameter of 2.0  $\mu\text{m}$  and an average fiber length of 25  $\mu\text{m}$  (hereinafter referred to as 'wollastonite A'), Daiken Fiber Nite

(manufactured in China, distributed by Sanyo Kogyo) having an average fiber diameter of 6.0  $\mu\text{m}$  and an average fiber length of 132  $\mu\text{m}$  (hereinafter referred to as 'wollastonite B'), WICROLL-10 (Partek Minerals) with an average fiber diameter of 4.5  $\mu\text{m}$  and an average fiber length of 13  $\mu\text{m}$  (hereinafter referred to as 'wollastonite C'), or, as a control, TISMO-D (Otsuka Chemical Co., Ltd., potassium titanate whisker) having a  
5 formulation of  $\text{K}_2\text{O} \cdot 8\text{TiO}_2$ , an average fiber diameter of 0.4  $\mu\text{m}$  and an average fiber length of 15  $\mu\text{m}$  was provided. In a twin-screw extruder (Ikegai Iron Works, PCM45) at a cylinder temperature of 300 °C, Zeonex 480 was melted and the fiber or whiskers were added (by the side feed method) in the course. The pellets obtained by strand cutting were injection-molded using an injection machine (Nissei Resin Industries, FS-150) at a cylinder temperature of 290 °C, a die temperature of 130 °C and an injection pressure of 800  
10  $\text{kg/cm}^2$  G. The physical properties of the product were then determined.

The results are shown in Table 5.

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Table 5

	Example										Comparative Example	
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Cyclic polyolefin resin	85	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	100	70
Compound-ing formula	15	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	-	-
Wollastonite A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wollastonite B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wollastonite C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Potassium titanate whiskers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Dielectric constant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C]	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	4.7
Dielectric loss tangent	0.0006	0.0006	0.0008	0.0006	0.0008	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	0.0005	0.0538
Physico-electrical properties of resin composition	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.2	4.6
Dielectric constant $\epsilon$ [10GHz, 25°C]	0.0002	0.0002	0.0004	0.0002	0.0004	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0001	0.053
Dielectric loss tangent	0.0002	0.0002	0.0004	0.0002	0.0004	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0001	0.053
Tensile strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	660	670	470	560	470	560	560	560	560	560	620	700
Flexural strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	940	890	670	790	670	790	790	790	790	790	820	1090
Flexural modulus of elasticity (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	31000	55000	40000	37000	40000	37000	37000	37000	37000	37000	21000	58000
Izod impact strength (kgf·cm/cm)	1.4	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.2	1.9
Thermal deformation temperature (°C)	128	134	130	133	130	133	133	133	133	133	123	134

It is apparent from Table 5 that while the cyclic polyolefin resin is intrinsically very low in dielectric constant and dielectric loss tangent and, as such, is very suited as a circuit board matrix resin (Comparative Example 12), incorporation of reinforcing fibers is effective in enhancing its resistance to heat (Examples 13 - 16 and Comparative Example 13).

When potassium titanate whiskers which are conventionally used as a resin-reinforcing filler are added in a proportion of 30 weight %, the dielectric constant and dielectric loss tangent at 1 MHz are fairly large, i.e. 4.7 and 0.0538, respectively. When wollastonite is used (Examples 14 - 16), the dielectric constant is 2.5 - 2.7 and the dielectric loss tangent is 0.0006 - 0.0008, indicating that the thermal deformation temperature and flexural modulus of elasticity can be improved while the low dielectric constant and low dielectric loss tangent are sustained. The dielectric characteristics at 10 GHz were determined by the cavity

perturbation method. As found, wollastonite (Examples 14 - 16) provided for satisfactory dielectric characteristics even in the 10 GHz band, with the dielectric constant of 2.5 - 2.7 and the dielectric loss tangent of 0.0002 - 0.0004, indicating that these products are of great utility value as high-frequency materials.

The reinforcing effect of wollastonite varies with its morphology. In Examples 13 and 14 where a wollastonite A comprising fibers with aspect ratios not less than 6 in a proportion of not less than 90 weight % and those with diameters not greater than 5  $\mu\text{m}$  in a proportion not less than 95 weight % was used, greater improvements were realized in mechanical properties as compared with wollastonite C which is somewhat larger in fiber diameter and smaller in aspect ratio.

In connection with fiber morphology, when a coarse wollastonite comprising fibers with aspect ratios not smaller than 10 in a proportion of at least 60 weight % but fibers with diameters not less than 6  $\mu\text{m}$  in a proportion of at least 80 weight % was employed as in Example 15, it was difficult to insure sufficient mechanical strength and desirable thermal characteristics.

#### Examples 17 - 22 and Comparative Examples 14 - 19

A resin composition (pellets) was prepared using Ultem #1010-1000 (distributor: GE Plastics Japan Ltd.) as the polyetherimide resin at an extruder cylinder temperature of 340 °C or using Vectra C950 (distributor: Polyplastics), a thermotropic liquid crystal polyester, at an extruder cylinder temperature of 310 °C in otherwise the same manner as Examples 13 - 16. The polyetherimide resin composition was injection-molded at a cylinder temperature of 370 °C, a die temperature of 120 °C and an injection pressure of 700 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup> G and the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin composition at a cylinder temperature of 330 °C, a die temperature of 120 °C and an injection temperature of 800 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup> G. Then, the physical properties of the respective resin products were determined. The results for the polyetherimide resin composition are shown in Table 6 and the results for the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin composition in Table 7. In these procedures, as potassium titanate whiskers, neutral TISMO-N ( $\text{K}_2\text{O} \cdot 6\text{TiO}_2$ , manufacturer: Otsuka Chemical Co., Ltd.) was added to the polyetherimide resin for the purpose of preventing a viscosity increase in melting and to the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester for the prevention of alkali decomposition.

Table 6

	Example					Comparative Example	
	17	18	19	14	15	15	16
Polyetherimide resin	85	70	70	100	85	70	
Compound- Wollastonite A	15	30	-	-	-	-	
ing formula Wollastonite C	-	-	30	-	-	-	
Potassium titanate whiskers	-	-	-	-	15	30	
Dielectric constant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C]	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.1	4.8	6.1	
Dielectric loss tangent	0.0011	0.0008	0.0008	0.006	0.0367	0.0713	
Physico-electrical properties of resin composition	1080	1120	1010	1100	1160	1240	
Tensile strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	1720	1760	1320	1400	1520	1630	
Flexural strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	55000	79000	64000	28000	46000	67000	
Flexural modulus of elasticity (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	1.6	2.9	1.9	1.8	2.5	2.3	
Izod impact strength (kgf·cm/cm)							

Table 7

	Example					Comparative Example		
	20	21	22	17	18	19		
Compound- ing formula	75	50	55	100	75	55		
Thermotropic LC polyester resin	-	-	20	-	-	20		
Calcium pyrophosphate	25	50	25	-	-	-		
Wollastonite A	-	-	-	-	25	25		
Potassium titanate whiskers	3.5	3.7	3.9	3.1	5.6	5.2		
Dielectric constant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C]	0.0174	0.0104	0.0139	0.020	0.134	0.073		
Dielectric loss tangent	1650	1610	1160	990	1840	1220		
Physico-electrical properties of resin composition	1720	1930	1440	1470	2050	1630		
Flexural modulus	117000	180000	103000	58000	133000	132000		
Flexural modulus of elasticity (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	8.2	3.5	2.9	2.5	4.3	3.7		
Izod impact strength (kgf·cm/cm)	243	250	245	210	245	246		
Thermal deformation temperature (°C)								

While the reinforcing effect of these fibers on the polyetherimide resin is comparatively minor because the matrix is an amorphous resin, it is clear from Table 6 that whereas the dielectric constant was significantly increased with an increasing proportion of potassium titanate whiskers, the addition of wollastonite resulted in substantially no increase in dielectric constant and that as far as dielectric loss tangent is concerned, an increasing amount of wollastonite resulted in a progressive decrease as compared with the case of the resin alone and particularly at the addition level of 30 weight %, the tangent value decreased by one digit, indicating that very satisfactory characteristics are realized for electric/electronic

circuit board use.

It is apparent from Table 7 that because of the crystalline structure of the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin, the reinforcing effect of fibers is greater than that on the amorphous polyetherimide resin. In this case too, addition of potassium titanate whiskers resulted in a substantial increase in dielectric constant and an increase of one digit in dielectric loss tangent. In contrast, when wollastonite was added, the dielectric constant was increased only in a minor degree and the dielectric loss tangent was reduced in proportion with the level of addition and was smaller than the value found for the resin alone. Incidentally, calcium pyrophosphate powder (average particle diameter ca. 10  $\mu\text{m}$ ; manufacturer; Taihei Chemical Industrial) was added as an etching auxiliary for the thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin. This agent improves dielectric characteristics somewhat in the case of potassium titanate whiskers but tends to affect dielectric characteristics adversely in the case of wollastonite.

#### Examples 23 and 24, and Comparative Examples 20 - 22

To a phenol-epoxy resin (EPCLON 850, Dainippon Ink and Chemicals), as the thermosetting resin, was added 50 weight % of an E glass short staple fiber with a diameter of 13  $\mu\text{m}$  and 1.5 mm in length (Nippon Electric Glass Fiber), a potassium titanate fiber (Otsuka Chemical, Tismo-D), the same wollastonite A as used in Examples 1 and 2, or a xonotlite with an average fiber diameter of 0.7  $\mu\text{m}$  and an average fiber length of 5.2  $\mu\text{m}$ , as the reinforcing fiber, and after thorough mixing for dispersion, metaxylienediamine as the curing agent was added at the rate of 15 phR (15 parts by weight with respect to 100 parts by weight of the epoxy resin). The mixture was further stirred, degassed under reduced pressure and cast on a Teflon sheet partitioned by a 3 mm-thick spacer. The casting was allowed to stand at ambient temperature for 3 hours, after which it was cured at 130 °C for 3 hours. The flexural strength and deflection temperature under load (load: 18.5 kgf/cm<sup>2</sup>) were determined according to JIS K-6911 and the surface roughness was determined using Surfcom 300B (Tokyo Seimitsu Co., Ltd.) and expressed in center mean roughness Ra. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

	Example				Comparative Example			
	23	24	20	21	22			
Expoxy resin	50	50	100	50	50			
Compound- Wollastonite A	50	-	-	-	-			
ing formula Xonotlite	-	50	-	-	-			
Glass fiber	-	-	-	50	-			
Potassium titanate whiskers	-	-	-	-	50			
Dielectric constant $\epsilon$ [1MHz, 25°C]	3.5	3.4	3.9	4.8	6.2			
Dielectric loss tangent	0.0004	0.0007	0.007	0.012	0.115			
tan $\delta$ [1MHz, 25°C]	1030	1010	530	1100	1070			
Flexural strength (kgf/cm <sup>2</sup> )	148	147	125	150	147			
Deflection temperature under load (°C)	0.3	0.2	0.2	2.3	0.2			
Surface roughness ( $\mu\text{m}$ )								

It is apparent from Table 8 that even in the case of a thermosetting resin, the dielectric characteristics obtained with wollastonite or xonotlite are superior to those obtained with the conventional glass fiber (not to speak of potassium titanate whiskers) and that whereas the dielectric constant and dielectric loss tangent values obtained with other reinforcing materials are inferior to those found without addition of a reinforcement, wollastonite and xonotlite are conducive to very excellent dielectric characteristics for circuit board materials, with the dielectric constant being comparable to or slightly smaller and the dielectric loss tangent being reduced by one digit.

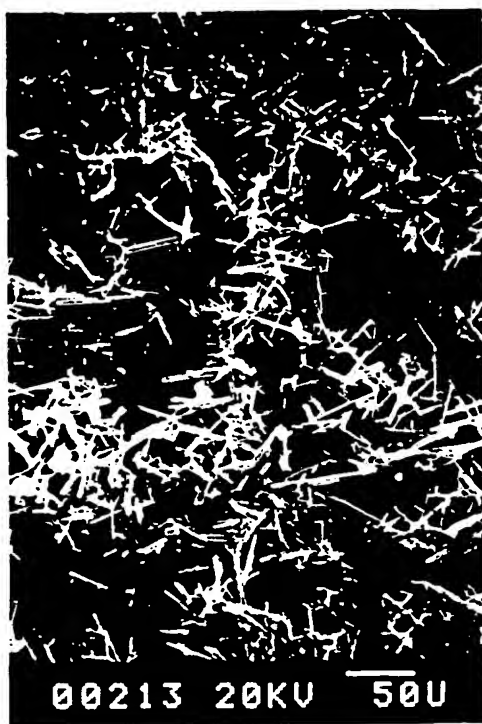
As to surface roughness, too, a very satisfactory surface of the submicron order was obtained, thus being found to be very advantageous in terms of adhesion to copper foil as well as in circuit printability.

## Claims

1. An electronic device resin composition comprising a thermoplastic resin or a thermosetting resin and a fiber component selected from the group consisting of whiskers of the composition represented by the general formula  $aA_xO_y \cdot bB_2O_3$  (wherein a and b each represents a whole number of 1 - 9; A represents a divalent or trivalent metal, x and y each represents a whole number of 1 - 3) and either wollastonite or xonotlite, which is a fibrous substance composed predominantly of  $CaO \cdot SiO_2$ , the latter component occurring in a proportion of 5 - 60% based on the combined weight of said resin and fiber component.
2. The electronic device resin composition of claim 1 wherein said thermoplastic resin is at least one member selected from the group consisting of poly(phenylene ether) resin, syndiotactic polystyrene, 5-methylpentene resin, cyclic polyolefin resin, heat-resistant ABS resin, heat-resistant polyamide resin, poly(phenylene sulfide) resin, aromatic polysulfone resin, polyetherimide resin, polyetherketone resin, polyethernitrile resin, thermotropic liquid crystal polyester resin and heat-fusible fluororesin.
3. The electronic device resin composition of claim 1 wherein said thermosetting resin is at least one member selected from the group consisting of phenolic resin, epoxy resin and unsaturated polyester resin.
4. The electronic device resin composition of claims 1 - 3 characterized in that said whiskers of the composition represented by general formula  $aA_xO_y \cdot bB_2O_3$  are whiskers of an aluminum borate of the formula  $9Al_2O_3 \cdot 2B_2O_3$  or  $2Al_2O_3 \cdot B_2O_3$  and/or whiskers of a magnesium borate of the formula  $2MgO \cdot B_2O_3$  and that either one or both of said kinds of whiskers are used in the fiber diameter range of 0.05 - 5  $\mu m$  and the fiber length range of 2 - 100  $\mu m$ .
5. The electronic device resin composition of claims 1 - 3 wherein said wollastonite comprises fibers with aspect ratios not less than 6 in a proportion of not less than 60 weight % and fibers with diameters not greater than 5  $\mu m$  in a proportion not less than 80 weight %.

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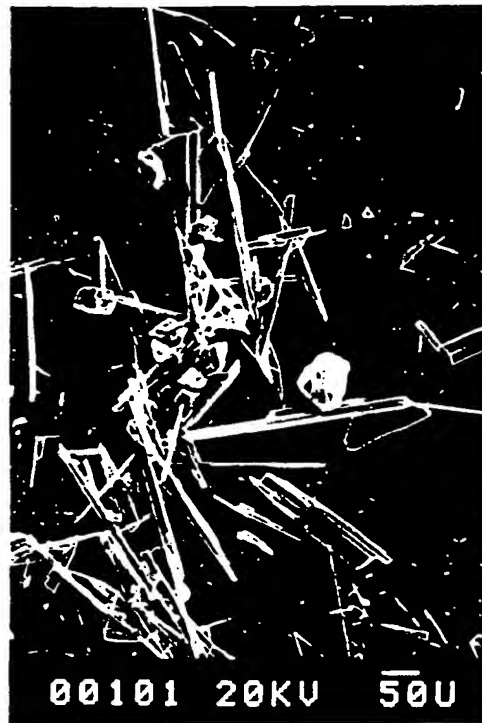
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## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP94/00113

<b>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER</b> Int. C15 C08L101/00, C08K7/04 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
<b>B. FIELDS SEARCHED</b> Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) Int. C15 C08L101/00, C08K7/04  Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched  Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
<b>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</b>		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	JP, A, 2-55761 (Shikoku Kasei Kogyo K.K.), February 26, 1990 (26. 02. 90), Claim, (Family: none)	1-5
X	JP, A, 2-166134 (Shikoku Kasei Kogyo K.K.), June 26, 1990 (26. 06. 90), Claim, (Family: none)	1-5
X	JP, A, 1-210452 (Idemitsu Petrochemical Co., Ltd.), August 24, 1989 (24. 08. 89), Claim, (Family: none)	1-5
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
<p>* Special categories of cited documents:</p> <p>"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</p> <p>"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date</p> <p>"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)</p> <p>"O" document referring to as oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means</p> <p>"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</p> <p>"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention</p> <p>"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone</p> <p>"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art</p> <p>"Z" document member of the same patent family</p>		
Date of the actual completion of the international search April 6, 1994 (06. 04. 94)		Date of mailing of the international search report May 10, 1994 (10. 05. 94)
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